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International Atomic Energy Agency
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Agenda item 14
(GC(42)/20)

PLAN FOR PRODUCING POTABLE WATER ECONOMICALLY

Resolution adopted on 25 September 1998 during the 10th plenary meeting

The General Conference,

(a) Recalling its resolutions GC(40)/RES/14 and GC(41)/RES/14,

(b) Recognizing that sufficient and clean potable water supplies for all mankind are of vital importance, as emphasized in Agenda 21 of the Rio Summit on Development and Environment and subsequently recalled at the 19th special session of the United Nations General Assembly,

(c) Taking note with great concern of the fact that more than 60 per cent of the world's population will, over the next 30 years, face the ever-growing problems of potable water shortages,

(d) Noting that seawater desalination using nuclear energy, as an alternative to the use of fossil-fuelled plants for supplying energy for seawater desalination, is technically feasible and in general cost-effective,

(e) Noting also the interest of a number of Member States in activities relating to seawater desalination using nuclear energy,

(f) Underlining the urgent need for regional and international co-operation in helping to solve the serious problem of potable water shortages, particularly through the desalination of seawater,

(g) Taking note with appreciation of the different activities carried out by the Secretariat, as outlined in the report of the Director General contained in document GC(42)/1/Rev.1,

(h) Welcoming the preparation of the Guidebook on "Introduction of Nuclear Desalination",

(i) Noting with appreciation that the Agency has initiated a programme to assist developing countries interested in small and medium-sized reactors (SMRs), and

(j) Acknowledging that SMRs are of particular interest also for non-electrical energy, particularly in the desalination of seawater,

1. Requests the Director General to continue consultation and interaction with interested States, the competent organizations of the United Nations system, multilateral financial institutions, regional development bodies and other relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in activities relating to seawater desalination using nuclear energy;

2. Invites the Director General to continue to take the appropriate measures to assist Member States, particularly from developing countries engaged in the process of preparatory actions with regard to demonstration projects;

3. Urges the Director General to continue the Agency's work regarding the safety and security aspects of desalination using nuclear energy;

4. Stresses the need for international co-operation in the planning and implementation of nuclear desalination demonstration programmes through national and regional projects opened for the participation of any interested developing country;

5. Invites the Director General to take appropriate measures and concrete actions, on the basis of the technical and economic feasibility of seawater desalination using nuclear energy, with a view to the effective development and practical application of nuclear technologies for producing potable water economically;

6. Further invites the Director General to seek extrabudgetary funding and manpower support through appeals to prospective donor countries in order to further strengthen the Agency's activities relating to nuclear desalination and small and medium reactor development;

7. Further requests the Director General to assign appropriate priority to the nuclear desalination of seawater and small and medium reactor development in the process of preparing the Agency's programme and budget and to promote effective international information exchange and co-operation;

8. Also requests the Director General to assign appropriate priority for the development of the SMR programme, particularly to be used in the nuclear desalination of seawater coupled with electric power generation; and

9. Requests the Director General to report on the progress made in the implementation of this resolution to the Board of Governors and to the General Conference at its forty-third session under an appropriate agenda item.